

# LOADSTAR LETTER #76

## Y2K Comes With Just One Catastrophe: The End Of The Loadstar Letter

By Jeff Jones. This has been a very difficult newsletter to write because this is my last. That's right. The Loadstar letter, after six glorious years, will retire into the annals of history. In 1994, when Loadstar was 5000 subscribers strong, rumors abounded that Loadstar was about to fail. After a brainstorming session, Fender and I decided to start the Loadstar Letter - just to show we had money (and time) to burn. Fender and Judi want you to know that they will honorably handle the remainder of your subscriptions. For every issue of Loadstar Letter past #76 that a person has paid for, they will get \$1.50 credit for any Loadstar product or 1 for 1 on back issues of the Letter.

Looking back on my small stack of Loadstar Letters (I

don't have all of them at home), I see that at one time we spent quite a bit of money producing it, paying buck\$ monthly for film, which allowed our commercial printer to create plates and print pages crisper than any home or commercial laser printer. As the Commodore base has dwindled in past years, we have had to drop the film, and opt for a newsletter that's photocopied instead of run with ink on a press. That's why you have seen more text and fewer graphics lately.

What will become of the Loadstar Letter? Hopefully I'll be able to flow as much content onto Loadstar's web page, and Fender has continually extended an offer for me to write for the Loadstar disk. I have to say that I don't relish the idea of losing my Commodore audience, so I guess I had better re-allocate my Loadstar Letter time for Loadstar before something else eats it up. Happy Millennium.

## The Y2K Hype Crashes To A Halt And Then Swept Under A Rug

By Jeff Jones. Wasn't the sky supposed to fall? Does anyone but me remember the hundreds of hours of news talk about Y2K? My version of Windows 98 does have *some* Y2K problems for which there are patches available. The bugs are so benign that I don't even know what they are. Being a programmer, I realize how easy it is to Y2K-proof a program. I also realized that we spent many billions of dollars,

hiring thousands of programmers to hunt through code and fix it. My ex-boss earned \$50 per hour on Y2K consulting this past summer and she knew little about it. I knew because she paid me far less than \$50 per hour to get her 30 computer stations in line. You might remember that my devotion to Y2K was limited to a satirical article in this publication. As The Year 2000 rolled across the world from east to west at supersonic speed, American reporters had a chance to preview the year 2000 on the other side of the globe. The dreaded Y2K bug had either been sufficiently squashed by overpaid programmers or simply had no visible tangible effect where it did appear. I watched the news all day from 12-31-1999 through 1-1-2000. Reporters clearly talked around the lack of Y2K news, mentioning it only once that I can remember. This angered me.

After an entire two years of hyping Y2K, and then accelerating the hype in past months, the least the media could have done was admit their error. I regularly watch the Fox and CNN talk shows, *Newswatch* and *Reliable Sources*. Shows pride themselves in holding journalists to a high standard and asking "Should we have aired this?" Neither show gave suitable apology or lambasting for wasting our time with hype. This was the kind of hype that sent thousands of people into hock, buying generators and supplies they couldn't afford. I wouldn't be surprised if people actually died in house fires because of gasoline-hoarding.

This was news at its worst. It didn't inform. It exacerbated a

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problem that didn't even exist. It's sort of like saying, "If we don't build our heating oil reserves for the winter, people might freeze - but let's concentrate on the unlikely event that all areas have no heating oil." How did this affect me? Well I got a lot of Y2K questions from Commodore users.

The explanations of Y2K were too dumbed down for me to understand. Computers wouldn't "stop" if they were not Y2K compliant, they would simply give the wrong date. The only people who really should have worried were people who received government checks because they are sent out by date, and a non-compliant computer would think you were too young to receive a social security check if you were born in 1932 but its clock says it's January 1900. You're negative 32 years old.

If you ask me, I honestly believe that most of the media knew that January 1, 2000 would be like any other day. I know because I now work in a government facility and I saw how seriously they tested every piece of machinery to make sure it was "Y2K Okay". I even saw a "Y2K Okay" sticker on a grinding stone. TV reporters saw the same stringent testing going on at their stations, and they also saw almost all of their computers work just fine in Y2K tests - but they made sure to report gloom at every opportunity.

## Job Opportunities! Millions Of Positions Open For The Hopelessly Gullible

By Jeff Jones. I have a fax number. It's 419-818-4311. Actually it's an Efax number, and any fax sent there comes to my Email

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inbox for free through efax.com. It's a PC thing, but I thought I'd mention it because once again the downside of free communication is excessive junk communication. Most Loadstar Readers are on the net or will be on the net within two years. When you get online, you will be bombarded with tons of Email like this. I've gotten about ten junk faxes, each about 200k in size. If I receive much more, I will cancel my Efax account.

Efax, sensing that a new wave of misuse is on the horizon, has already emailed me to me know that they will When you can spamfaxOf course for some reason people with gimmicks have cheaper gimmicks when they

## Geos Publication

By Jeff Jones. Okay, the publisher, Willis Patten: [wcpat@iglou.com](mailto:wcpat@iglou.com), won't win any rewards for creative naming, but GEOS Publication is worth looking at. From the author's web page: GEOS Publication began back in December of 1994 and has had basically one big objective from the beginning: to serve the educational needs of COMMODORE GEOS USERS, whether beginners, average users, or advanced users. I publish letters of interest from my readers, in addition to articles on a wide variety of topics relating to Commodore peripherals, utilities, and software relating to GEOS. I also sometimes include articles of humor or human interest. GEOS Publication runs from 10 to 16 pages. Subscriptions barely cover my business expenses, and are: \$17.00 US, \$20.00 Western Hemisphere outside US & Territories, England, Europe, Asia, Africa, Australia, and all others are \$23.00. I am not set up for MasterCard, Visa, or other credit cards. Money orders, personal and bank cashier checks are acceptable, & Travelers Express. I accept U.S. currency only. For a TRIAL ISSUE send your Name and Address and appropriate postage to:

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<http://www.ocslink.com/~andrews/geospub.htm>

## Centipede Y2K Bug Fix

By Adam Fanello. Sorry about this folks. I always figured that if Centipede was still being used into 2000, that I'd still be supporting it. The idea was that I would do a full testing sometime later and add any fixes to the routine updates. Well that never happened, and I found the ComLink Hub showing a date of 01/01100 this morning. (99 became 100 and overwrote the slash.)

I have come up with what, I think, should take care of the problem. It's working so far on the hub.

load "mdl.date&time", 8

```
28030 if i<. then a$=a$+right$(da
$2):else a$=a$+right$(mid$(str
$(i)+"0",2),2)
```

```
scratch "mdl.date&time"
save "mdl.date&time", 8
```

Note that the only change on that line is the addition of the +"0". That's a zero, not an oh. Restart your system and enter the date with 2000 as the year. A couple of notes:

- Centipede will fail again on January 1st, 2001. If you're still running, all you'll need to do is shut down and boot back up, re-entering the date.
- This fix is for manually entering the date. If you are getting the date from your CMD drive with a RTC in it, you don't need the fix. Just reboot to read the correct date from the CMD.

[Ant@Fanello.net](mailto:Ant@Fanello.net)  
<http://www.fanello.net/>  
[bugsoft](http://www.fanello.net/bugsoft)

## Commodore 8-bit Users Survey

By Cameron Kaiser. For those who have not yet completed it, the Commodore 8-bit Users Survey is still awaiting your responses. It'll take just a few minutes and would help tremendously! Results and summaries will be made available when the survey closes. Your individual data will not be disclosed.

<http://stockholm.ptloma.edu/cbm/special/survey/>

Last day for surveys is Monday 31 January 2000.

Thanks for your assistance!

## The Wave: C-64 Browser Update

Mainly by Maurice Randall. The latest news is the browser is now capable of handling most any html tag except for those dealing with frames and images. That stuff will come after I get finished with getting this thing ready for its first login session. I'm trying desperately to get something ready for everyone to play with before Christmas.

Actually, part of the framework is done. In a sense, the current method of displaying the html document in the entire screen is no different than displaying it in a portion of the screen, which would be a frame. The code for displaying on the screen is the same as that which

will be used for displaying within individual frames. The scrollbar routines are adjustable to work a scrollbar at any position on the screen and at any height, with any amount of content. So, we can have the ability to scroll any part of the screen. The scrollbar routines I've got now are better than the ones I created for the Dashboard. These new routines will eventually find their way into a new version of the Dashboard.

Scrolling the html document up and down is pretty fast. You can grab the scrollbar and move it up and down as fast as you want, and the page moves just as fast as your mouse does. There's absolutely no lag at all.

The Wave requires a SuperCPU with SuperRAM. 1 meg will work, but more is better. There are two version, Wave64 and Wave128. They are pretty much identical except for screen resolution. The 128 version runs on the 80-column screen in graphic mode while the 64 version uses the graphic mode of the VICII. They require Wheels 64/Wheels 128 as the OS. The Wave has a graphical browser built in, plus a VT100/ANSI terminal including a telnet mode. It's still in its early stages of development, but the first public release version should be ready within a few weeks. It will be limited to some degree, but development will continue and new versions will be released as they are ready.

The Wave is a free application and will be available for downloading from my web site (<http://people.delphi.com/arca83>) or from my BBS (517-322-2386) when it's ready. Once this gets going good, I'll have a

built in routine for automatic upgrading to make it easy to keep up with the new releases that might come out every other week or so. You'll just go to my web site and click on a link and you'll be prompted if you want to upgrade The Wave. Click on YES and the process will be handled for you.

The Wave installs itself as the default desktop until you exit it. While it's running, you can launch other applications like geoWrite or any other app. There will also be new Wave modules that will run right within the browser. Call them "plug-ins" if you'd like. There, that's a brief rundown. Now I must get back to work. :)

Some people have asked me to just throw a text based browser together that would work like Lynx, to get the thing going quicker. But I have no desire to do a Lynx type browser. Cameron is working on something like that and it will take care of those that don't have the horsepower for The Wave. Plus there are a few other people doing similar projects. And besides, I don't think it's taking all that long to get this thing to its initial working stage.

## What HTML tags will it support?

Here are the tags that currently work. (more will be added as time goes on):

html, head, title, body, br, p, h1-h6, b, i, u, em, strong, font, code, dfn, kbd, comment, blockquote, bq, hr, center, li, ul, ol, a, table, tr, td, th, var, tt, samp, cite, pre, caption, !--, address

The following attributes are recognized and parsed, but only some of them are actually used at this point:

action, align, alt, bgcolor, border, checked, clear, color, cols, colspan, compact, coords, enctype, face, height, href, id, lowsrc, maxlength, method, multiple, name, noresize, nowrap, rows, rowspan, scrolling, selected, shape, single, size, src, text, topmargin, usemap, valign, value, width, wrap, continue

Of the recognized attributes, the following are actually used by several of the tags:

align, face, height, href, size, width

I considered those attributes the minimum to get started with. Then some of the attributes can have values assigned to them. Anything with numbers or strings is recognized along with the following values:

left, right, center, justify, texttop, top, middle, bottom

So, as you can see, many tags and attributes are still missing, but a very good set is supported to get started with.

It's currently handling PPP with PAP, for dialing into an ISP. The PPP is pretty much finished but untested yet since I haven't performed my first logon test. This is because the TCP/IP is not ready to go yet. It should be ready very soon though. And then we will get our very first Internet access with The Wave.

## A Giant Software Company Lies To Jeff Jones

By Jeff Jones. Recently I went to a multi-million-dollar software giant (not Microsoft) and purchased a product from them online. When I did, they asked me if I would allow them to give my name to other companies. I clicked on the "no" box and went ahead and purchased the software. Before typing in my name, I figured that I would affix a sophisticated tracking device on my account with this company since I specifically told them *not* to sell my name. My fantastic tracking device? Why, my name of course! I entered my name as "Jeff DukeNukem Jones." That way I'd know that anyone who wrote to me using that name received my name from that software giant. Wouldn't you know it, a few months later I began receiving snail-junk-mail to "Jeff DukeNukem Jones." This proved that my name was sold when I asked for it not to be. Since then I've been giving false info, especially Email addresses, except where I absolutely want the company to reach me.

In defense of the company, the mail I received was actually interesting. I don't really mind paper junk mail. It's junk Email that stinks because it's like buckshot looking for truly vulnerable suckers.

## E-Commerce: Another Giant Sucking Sound?

By Jeff Jones. I only use one credit card and I hate to use it for small purchases that I might not pay off, so if I can, I will pay with a check. If it's a tele-purchase, I'll go phone check if possible. I remember Emailing a big E-merchant to ask about the acceptance of checks. I received a short reply weeks later stating that there was no facility to accept checks or phone-in orders. It was because this E-business is set up to run automatically. It reduces overhead by employing a minimum of people and resources. That kind of business is bad for America. Because it not only employs fewer people, it barely even impacts the neighborhood it's in.

What's wrong with this picture? Jeff Jones sounding like Ross Perot? Well, E-commerce bothers me, Not E-commerce like E-Loadstar. I mean *big* E-commerce like shop.com and toysrus.com - even amazon.com. I'm concerned because as we begin to move toward more and more E-commerce, the local store suffers. When I say "local," I don't just mean the mom and pop corner store, I mean the local Wal-Mart, too. Yes, if everybody gets a computer and begins shopping online, only the e-merchants and UPS will benefit. Local stores are great because they employ a great many people and purchase a great deal of services from merchants local and abroad. Their employees buy services from other local merchants and the cycle of life continues. With E-commerce, you have a computer sending out

shipping directions to an unheated/un-air-conditioned wholesale warehouse on the outskirts of some coastal city, which might employ only a dozen people. What's more, the warehouse probably isn't even be owned by the E-merchant. The package is then shipped to your doorstep with as few people as possible benefiting from it. You get it wholesale minus the savings -- with no cashier, no air-conditioned store, no real tangible service - but *full* price *plus* shipping.

These institutions funnel money to a very few rich guys. Of course if I were one of them, I wouldn't be complaining. But I'm not, so there!

I may seem to be talking out of both sides of my face after my recent defense of E-commerce, assuring you all the it is as safe to transmit your credit card number over the Internet as it is to us your credit card anywhere else. Your credit card number indeed almost always uses the Internet to get to your creditor. I stand by that claim, and I still make the occasional Internet purchase. I worked overtime so that my kids could have a great Christmas, but I spent my money *locally*.

I admit that I've always purchased my Electronic equipment from catalogs, and I do a lot of research before I do it. I just purchased a new effects processor from [www.musiciansfriend.com/](http://www.musiciansfriend.com/) because they have the best prices and a helpful easy search engine that helps me find what I need and then gives me additional useful info on the item if I desire. I won't buy from our local music stores because one of them just sold a friend of mine a \$2100

MSRP keyboard for \$2800. Another local merchant simply has a condescending attitude.

To E-commerce, I say come on. Bring me more services and help me find and purchase items that I can't find locally. But I like to shop, roaming aisles mindlessly. Unless I'm bed-ridden, or I just can't beat the deal or can't find it locally, I'm willing to make a trip to a merchant - even if it means polluting the environment with my gas-guzzling car.

## The Last Loadstar Letter Reader Mail Ever

Jeff - I wanted to pass on an observation related to your item (Loadstar #75, p.3) on using hunt and replace to get rid of undesired returns in text files.

You ended the item with an outline of the "algorithm" you have used to do this operation.

I wanted to note that The Write Stuff 128 has this algorithm implemented as a standard command (CTRL-SHIFT-0, that is the number zero, not the letter O). When called on, it asks if you want the extra returns removed. If you respond yes, out they come.

Unfortunately, this feature - and the approach you outlined - does not deal with the most annoying aspect of the extra returns problem. That is, the case where you have:

item1  
item2  
item3  
item4

Here you do *not* want them concatenated - but since they do *not* have a space at the beginning of the lines, that is

what happens.

To avoid it, I go thru a document and insert spaces at the beginning of such lines - which can become tedious if it is much of an article - or has lots of item lists. Since it is a common occurrence, this editing before invoking the remove extra returns routine, is also a common activity.

Since these items are structured just like the stuff you do want concatenated, I have not been able to see any way around the difficulty.

Thanks for the write-up however, it is a very good reminder item!!

Emil Volcheck...

**Jeff:** Thanks for the info on the CTRL-zero. I believe I've used TWS-128 for years without invoking that feature. I did use its parent routine when reading in files. Funny, I'm using Word 2000 now, which came with less printed documentation than TWS 128, and it doesn't kill lines except when reading a text file. If you paste in lines, you can forget invoking some routine to kill lines, which is why I've written a Word Macro to do it for me. Fender and I got into the habit of always writing Loadstar text with those spaces heralding all items in a list. This wasn't merely to help with killing lines, but also with printing 40-column text as 80 columns from Loadstar's presenter. Without that space, our presenter would print item 1 item 2 item 3 item 4.

Hi,

I currently own a copy of Sogwap Software's BIG BLUE READER and I've used it to convert my Bedtime Story files to

MS-DOS format for people who have IBM clone computers. The version I have is the latest version, Version 4.1, copyright 1986-1993 Michael R. Miller, SOGWAP Software. I usually use the C-128 version found on Side A of the 1541 disk.

The "SET-CLOCK" program was designed to set BIG BLUE READER's time and date stamp from any CMD device equipped with the RTC chip, such as the FD-2000, the RAMLink, or the HD-Series Hard Drives. I currently have two FD-2000's, designated as Drive 10 (with the RTC) and Drive 11 (without the RTC). My RAMLink (Drive 13) has the RTC as does my HD-200 (Drive 12). The clock in the RAMLink is the one I use most often because it seems to be more accurate than the ones in the FD-2000, the HD-200, and the Smart Mouse.

Here's the problem: ever since January 1, 2000, the "SET-CLOCK" program would set the time, but the date would end up as Jan 1, 1993. I'm not into complicated BASIC programs with a lot of PEEK, POKE, and SYS commands. In fact, to be quite honest, I'm more of a user than a programmer. I know absolutely **NOTHING** about Commodore's machine languages.

I called the author of BIG BLUE READER, Michael R. Miller, Wednesday night, Jan. 19, 2000, and he seemed very uninterested in supporting his BBR program and told me, "I think you got your money's worth out of it if you used it that much."

If any programmers on the LOADSTAR staff can help me out by fixing the BBR SET-CLOCK program to make it Y2K ready, I sure would appreciate it. I can remember on many occasions

that when a LOADSTAR subscriber discovered a bug in a program published by LOADSTAR, Fender and Jeff have been very efficient and prompt with their fixes for the programs written in BASIC. I also remember when I had a problem with Nick's NOVATERM 9.6 patch C, Nick was very prompt and precise about my problem and I'll continue to support people like Nick, Fender and Judi, Jeff Jones, and the folks at CMD.

In the meantime, I'll continue using BIG BLUE READER, but I'll have to set the time and date stamp from the main menu rather than from the CMD RTC's until someone comes up with a fix for the SET-CLOCK program.

Thank you,  
Howard Halasz Houston, Texas

**Jeff:** We can't change your program mainly because it's protected and the author has gone through great lengths to hide away code in order to make it uncopyable. Altering your program may make the protection scheme believe the original disk is a copy and thus fail to boot. It's not impossible, just very hard.

The problem you have is at the heart of the Y2K bug. The version of your program was written in 1993, and the author has code in there that probably looks like this:

If year < 93 then make the year 93

This "smart" code makes the date function fumble. I would handle setting the date on the Windows side. After all it's there where you will probably see the date most often. Windows offers no easy (menu-driven) way to change the date of files because changing the

date of a file could help in various types of fraud. In your case, you have legitimate reasons for changing the date of your files. There are however programs to help you with this. Head on over to [www.hotfiles.com/](http://www.hotfiles.com/) and download Date/Time Shell Extension by Laurent Berger. Date/Time is a free Windows shell extension. It adds a new page to the Properties dialog box that lets you interactively change the date and time for files. You can change the date/time a file was created and/or last modified. It works with multiple files too.

I will add that it's usually not important to date files except for your own edification.

Dear Jeff,

My problem is that I have an old Commodore 64 hard drive called ST10C. It was made around 1985 by a company that is no longer in business. I found it at a sale with a very brief User Manual. I am trying to partition it to make finding programs easier. The user manual is no help. It does understand lots of the same commands that the 1541 uses. The manual does say that the DOS system was written in 8085 machine code if this helps. It also states to view the version of DOS I type: OPEN 15, 8, 15

INPUT#15,EN\$,EM\$,ESS\$, ET\$  
PRINT EN\$, EM\$, ESS\$, ET\$

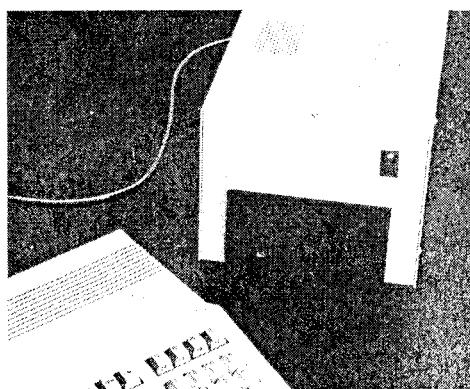
Hitting return after each line but nothing shows up on the screen. I have copied programs to it and ran programs from it but the more I put on it the longer it takes to find and run them. I thought partitions may help speed things up. I have had my

64 for 4 years and have some understanding of programs and some programming so I think with some help I can figure this out. I have talked to CBM but they would rather sell me one of their hard drives than help. Any help you can give me would be appreciated. If you need more info on the unit; IC's, hard drive type; let me know. Thanks.

Joe

**Jeff:** Your Data Chief, a 10-megabyte drive which sold for a mere \$895, (my, how things change), doesn't support partitions that I know of. With a drive so small, I can't see how partitions will do anything but get in the way of you getting to your files.

On the CMD drive I used for years, I made the uses of subdirectories within partitions to keep my files in order. Since I'm assuming that this drive is probably



less than 20 megabytes, I'd say that if you can do subdirectories, you can probably get by without partitioning.

Input# shouldn't be used in the immediate mode. It can be confusing because it sort of turns off your screen editor. It should only be used in a program. For your code to work, you would have to enter a program like the following and then run it:

```
10 OPEN 15,DV,15
20 INPUT #15, EN$, EM$, ES$, ET$
30 CLOSE 15
30 PRINT EN$ EM$ ES$ ET$
```

This is only cosmetic but I took the commas out of line 30 because they spread the output into the nearest ten-column print zone. In other words instead of printing

00ok0000

The commas will print something like

00 ok 00 00

on your screen. That looks fine here, but if the error message is illegal track or sector, the error message might wrap.

If the manual doesn't offer help on partitioning, it probably can't be partitioned or the DOS doesn't support a partitioned drive. Theoretically, partitioning can speed up some disk access because the drive head has limited movement thus average access time (not data transfer rate) is decreased. This doesn't mean that data is being sent through the wires to your memory any faster. It does mean that when your head has to move from here to there, it takes less time. Now if your access time is doubled or even (gosh) *quadrupled*, you might save a fraction of a second. In the real world, you might have one partition that is always slower than others and another that's faster but for Commodore use, this should mean little because of the slow rate that the C-64 actually requests the data being loaded or saved. For larger CMD drives, partitioning is required because the DOS can only manage and "see" 16 MB at a time. For smaller-than-16-Mb drives, partitioning can quickly become

restrictive.

[Jeff's email response sent]  
[Joe's Email reply:]

**Joe:** I want to thank you very much for your help with my hard drive. I typed in the information as a program and typed RUN and I got the message I was looking for. It gave the version of DOS the system runs on. Now I still have to figure out how to make it search, find, and load files faster. The attachment I have sent along with this reply has a list of commands it understands but I don't know if they will help me in the way of speed. Any further help will be appreciated.

Joe.

Jeff: Your drive does have an IEEE interface which offers faster data transfer rates, but only to programs that support requesting data through that port. My suggestion to you is to get a CMD hard drive *and* JiffyDOS if you want a fast hard drive on a Commodore that acts the way you want it. CMD hard drives are the only ones that truly support a fast loader (their own). It works flawlessly.

Hi, Fender, Judi, and Jeff!

I read the forum on Issue 188 and was surprised to find out that Genie discontinued some of their local access phone numbers. I'm still using Genie and I still have a local access number for Genie here in Houston, which I'm using right now to send you this message. If Genie discontinues serving the Houston area, I still have HAL-PC, which costs \$35 a year if I renew my membership early. HAL-PC is an acronym for Houston Area League of PC Users, and their BBS system is

Commodore compatible if you have NOVATERM 9.6 patch C. For the \$40.00 I have limited access email and for an additional \$10.00 a month, I can get unlimited Internet access, but I haven't checked to see if the Internet stuff is Commodore friendly. I could check it out, but it would be a \$10.00 gamble.

For the LOADSTARITES that are concerned about services like Delphi and Genie dumping their Commodore customers, I'd recommend checking out some of your local bulletin board services. There are two other BBS services here in Houston that are Commodore friendly, although they are IBM PC based. One of them is THE NORMAL PLACE II BBS and their number is 281-861-8401. the other one is POOR MAN'S BBS and their number is 713-451-6455. With POOR MAN'S BBS, leave your modem in the auto-answer mode so that the sysop can check out your equipment and see if you can use his BBS. His name is Carl Beard and he tries to make his BBS compatible with all kinds of computers.

Howard Halasz

Jeff: Thanks for the info! Genie is struggling to survive, just like CompuServe and Prodigy, which were both once online titans. Genie never really meant to support Commodore. They merely happened to be text based just like Delphi, and didn't require proprietary software to log on. The loss of some local access numbers is an enigma to me. They probably only dropped certain types of access. I remember having to pay extra if I dialed certain numbers. I forgot whether it was telenet or sprynet. Either way, I did pay too much for Genie.



Steve Judd Sits on a Commodore screen

As the sign on Ronald Reagan's desk said, "It Can Be Done" -- jpeg on a stock machine.

## Thousands of Commodore Users Viewing Nudey Pics.

By Jeff Jones. Steve Judd and Erroll Smith have created their own separate jpeg viewers. Jpeg is the preeminent picture format on the Internet as well as other applications. Despite the lossy nature of jpegs, their small size and ability to store 16 million colors makes jpegs ideal for most any application. Consequently there are millions of jpeg images on the Internet that Commodore users heretofore have not been able to view.

Certain Commodore users have consistently expressed a desire to download and view Internet Jpegs. Steve Judd's *Juddjpeg* can be found at [www.ffd2.com](http://www.ffd2.com). Errol Smith's viewer can be found at <http://www.ros.com.au/~errol/64.html>

It uses standard hires bitmap mode and a floyd-steinburg error diffusion dither. For each 8x8 area of pixels, it finds the minimum and maximum gray levels of the image, and picks the two nearest VIC grays for that block and dithers using those levels. This means that only the nearest appropriate gray levels are used,

but for some parts of the image it can mean some blocking effects (for example, around the pup's ear on the left which probably won't be visible in the printed newsletter).

## Mysterious Amiga Development

Found on comp.sys.cbm. Source unknown. NEW YORK-- Personal computer maker Gateway signed a deal to sell its Amiga trademarks and computer systems to Amino Development Corp., the companies said today. The news marks another chapter in the Amiga saga. Gateway said in September that it had scrapped plans to develop a new Amiga machine. At the time, the PC maker said its Amiga subsidiary would focus on opportunities in the emerging information-appliance market and redefine itself as a software company.

The PC maker also said in September that it would consider licensing the Hardware design Amiga had come up with to satisfy current users. The news was a blow to fans of Amiga, which has a small but loyal following. The economics of making a computer for these followers apparently did not make sense to Gateway, even though its Amiga unit said in July it would



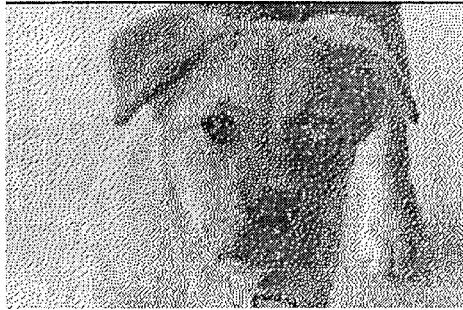
Steve's puppy in the PC Jpeg world



Full Color IFLI



MCM Lace grayscale



Puppy on a hires dithered Commodore grayscale screen.

offer a new computer. Terms of the Amino deal were not disclosed. Gateway senior vice president Peter Ashkin said in a statement the company elected to sell the Amiga name after deciding to wrap Amiga's software engineering function into Gateway's product development systems. San Diego-based Gateway acquired the rights to Amiga's technology in 1997.

# Follow All Of These Instructions Carefully For Error-Free Floppies!!

1. Never leave diskettes in the disk drive, as data can leak out of the disk and corrode the inner mechanics of the drive. Diskettes should be rolled up and stored in pencil holders.

2. Diskettes should be cleaned and waxed once a week. Microscopic metal particles can be removed by waving a powerful magnet over the surface of the disk. Any

stubborn metallic shavings can be removed with scouring powder and soap. When waxing the diskettes, make sure the surface is even. This will allow the diskette to spin faster, resulting in better access time.

3. Do not fold diskettes unless they do not fit into the drive. "Big" diskettes may be folded and used in "little" disk drives.

4. Never insert a diskette into the drive upside down. The data can fall off the surface of the disk and jam the intricate mechanics of the drive.

5. Diskettes cannot be backed up by running

them through the Xerox machine. If your data is going to need to be backed up, take a full-color picture.



*\*-30- is writer's shorthand for the end.*

## LOADSTAR LETTER #76

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